



September 2000

VOTING INFORMATION NEWS

Vol. 10 No. 9

A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) ☒ For voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.



Make Sure Your Vote Counts!

If your regular state absentee ballot does not arrive in time, use the

Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot

SUBMIT YOUR FEDERAL POST CARD APPLICATION SO THAT IT ARRIVES BY

October 9, 2000

Note this date on your calendar!

Why? In many states the deadline for receipt of registration and/or absentee ballot requests is 30 days before the election. October 9th is exactly 30 days before the November 7, 2000 General Election. Don't miss your state's deadline.

What exactly is the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot, what purpose does it serve and where is it available? When can it be used? Who can use it? Read on for these answers and many many more...

The most common barrier that citizens covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* encounter when voting absentee is insufficient ballot transit time. Many citizens are located in remote areas around the world where mail is not delivered or picked up on a regular basis (such as Peace Corps workers and missionaries, sailors and marines aboard ship, and airmen and sailors at isolated tracking sites).

For this reason the FVAP wants to spread the word to all U.S. citizens around the globe. If you submit the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA - SF-76) or other state accepted form for

registration and/or absentee ballot request in a timely manner - you may qualify to use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB - SF-186) as a back-up procedure if for some reason you do not receive the requested ballot in enough time to vote and return it to meet state ballot receipt deadlines (See note at end of article).

Citizens covered under the *UOCAVA* may use the FPCA (or other state accepted form) to simultaneously request registration and/or an absentee ballot from their state of legal residence. When completing the FPCA, follow all state/territory procedures before submitting it to the appropriate state election official.

Now...where the FWAB fits into the process. (See **FWAB**, page 2)

↓ REMOVE TAPE ON REVERSE AND FOLD HERE TO SEAL ↓

OFFICIAL FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT

SECURITY ENVELOPE

(ONLY PUT VOTED BALLOT INSIDE THIS ENVELOPE)

Standard Form 186 (OCT 95)

↑ DETACH HERE, FOLD AND INSERT INTO SECURITY ENVELOPE ↑

OFFICIAL FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT

PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT

U.S. SENATOR(S)*

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE/DELEGATE / RESIDENT COMMISSIONER****

* Legal residents of the District of Columbia may vote only for President/Vice President and Delegate.
** Legal residents of American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands may vote only for non-voting Delegate or Resident Commissioner to the Congress.

ADDENDUM

Some states allow the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot to be used by military and overseas civilian voters in elections other than general elections or for offices other than Federal offices. Consult your state section in the *Voting Assistance Guide* to determine your state's policy. If you are eligible to use this ballot to vote for offices/candidates other than those listed above, please indicate in the spaces provided below, the office for which you wish to vote (for example: Governor, Attorney General, Mayor, State Senator, etc.), and the name and/or party affiliation of the candidate for whom you wish to vote.

OFFICE	CANDIDATE NAME or PARTY AFFILIATION

Standard Form 186 (OCT 95)

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(FWAB, from page 1) Under Federal provisions, a U.S. citizen may lawfully use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot to vote for Federal offices in the General Election if that citizen meets all three of the following conditions:

- ① The citizen must be **located outside the United States including APO and FPO addresses**, and;
- ② The citizen must make a **timely ballot request** (submit the FPCA or other state accepted form) to their voting residence state requesting a state absentee ballot so that the appropriate Local Election Official receives their request at least 30 days before the election (this year the request must be received on or before October 9th for the 2000 General Election), and;
- ③ The citizen has **not received or voted** the regular state absentee ballot.


If a citizen meets all of these eligibility requirements, they may use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot.


To do this, a citizen may designate a candidate by writing the candidate's name on the ballot or by writing the name of a party affiliation on the ballot (if the intention of a voter can be ascertained then the candidate and/or party choice will be accepted). In addition, the FWAB is similar to the regular state absentee ballot as it includes a secrecy envelope and a mailing envelope. FWABs are available worldwide at U.S. Embassies and Consulates, military installations and overseas organizations and corporations with U.S. citizens.


Note: A sample FWAB with instructions can be found on pages 21-24 of the *2000-01 Voting Assistance Guide* and Chapter 3 provides state-specific instructions regarding the proper use of the FWAB (available in hard copy format or at the FVAP Website www.fvap.ncr.gov). The following six


states have expanded the use of the FWAB; Iowa, Montana, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Virginia and West Virginia. Check the *Guide* for details.

FVAP SUGGESTIONS:

 The FVAP recommends that citizens who have not received their regular state absentee ballot by the 25th day before the General election (October 14, 2000 for this year), complete and submit the FWAB to their state (only if all specified requirements have been met). This will help to ensure timely receipt of their absentee ballot. The FWAB must be received by the local election official not later than the deadline for receipt of regular state absentee ballots under state or territory law.

 Citizens who receive their regular state absentee ballot after submitting the FWAB, should vote and return it immediately. Reason: If a citizen's regular state absentee ballot arrives by the state's ballot return deadline, the state will count the regular state absentee ballot and discard the citizen's FWAB. In addition, the states may allow late counting of ballots under certain conditions.

 Citizens should carefully review their absentee ballot request and then their absentee ballot mailing envelope before submitting to further insure that it complies with state guidelines and instructions including any oath and witness requirements.

 Citizens should submit their absentee ballot request (FPCA) to the appropriate state election official in the correct jurisdiction and the FPCA must be received on or before October 9, 2000 to be eligible to use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot! (See **FWAB**, page 4)

Federal Voting Assistance Program

Voting Information News provides information for citizens and Voting Assistance Officers and is published monthly by the FVAP.

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Internet Access:

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 1155 Defense Pentagon
 Washington, DC 20301-1155



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Note: Copying or using VIN articles in other publications, etc. is encouraged.

Instructions for completing the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot

- 1 Please review all of the instructions before beginning!
- 2 Complete the Voter's Declaration/Affirmation Section on the reverse side of the mailing envelope. Have the ballot enveloped witnessed or notarized if required. Don't forget to Sign and Date this form!
- 3 Complete the write-in ballot. Write in the name of a candidate or party choice on the appropriate line.
- 4 Detach the write-in ballot from both the mailing envelope and the security envelope.
- 5 Insert the write-in ballot into the security envelope. Seal the security envelope.
- 6 Insert the sealed security envelope containing the write-in ballot into the mailing envelope.
- 7 Address the mailing envelope to the city, town or county local election official.
- 8 Write your current mailing address in the upper left hand corner of the mailing envelope.
- 9 Carefully review the voter check list on the mailing envelope before sealing and mailing.

VOTING ACTION OFFICERS

Department of State: Office of American Citizens Services

Voting Action Officer: Mr. Stuart Denyer **tel:** (202) 647-3495 **tel FTS:** 8-647-6060, **fax:** (202) 647-6201
E-mail: DenyerSR@state.gov

Service Voting Action Officers

Dept. of the Army: Mr. Tom Feazell **tel:** (703) 325-4530 **tel DSN:** 221-4530, **fax:** (703) 325-4532, **fax DSN:** 221-4532
E-mail: feazellt@hoffman.army.mil

Dept. of the Navy: Mr. John Hillis **tel:** (901) 874-4369, **tel DSN:** 882-4369,
fax: (901) 874-2689, **fax DSN:** 882-2689 **E-mail:** p662b@persnet.navy.mil
World Wide Web: <http://www.persnet.navy.mil/nvap>

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World Wide Web: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/ccprog/VOTING/VOTING.htm>

Marine Corps: Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Hellberg **tel:** (703) 784-9511 **tel DSN:** 278-9511, **fax:** (703) 784-9827,
fax DSN: 278-9827 **E-mail:** Dennis_J_Hellberg/MR/MANPOWER@manpower.usmc.mil

U.S. Coast Guard: MCPO Jeff Creighton **tel:** (202) 267-1636, **fax:** (202) 267-4823
E-mail: jcreighton@comdt.uscg.mil

All of the above can also be reached through the DoD Voting Information Center and the FVAP Website at www.fvap.ncr.gov

Please share this copy of VIN with others.

(FWAB, from page 2) Several states provide a State or Special Write-In Absentee Ballot for citizens who are unable to utilize regular state absentee voting procedures (ex. submariners, citizens in extremely isolated areas). This **State/Special** Write-In Absentee Ballot should not be confused with the **Federal** Write-In Absentee Ballot. Federal law prescribes eligibility requirements for FWAB use with state laws prescribing requirements for State/Special ballot use. State-specific instructions regarding proper use of State/Special ballots are provided in Chapter 3 of the 2000-01 *Voting Assistance Guide*. The following states provide a State/Special Write-In Ballot:

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut*, Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, Nebraska,

New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin

*Please Note: The State of Connecticut is not required by Federal law to accept the FWAB, though in 1996 began accepting it in regular elections for Federal offices. In addition, a Special State Write-In Ballot is available 90 days before an election to members of the Armed Forces and dependents accompanying them, who due to military contingencies, are unable to follow regular state absentee voting procedures.

Help give everyone the opportunity to learn about the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot. Pass this newsletter around to spread the News! ☑

Don't Forget to Celebrate Armed Forces Voters Week September 3 - 9, 2000!

Conduct Registration Drives!

Make sure that you are registered to receive the Voting Information News newsletters and the Voting News Releases. Why: Citizens will be notified through the Newsletter and Voting News Releases, and at the FVAP Website if a state or territory will allow the expanded use of this ballot (or other alternative). Citizens are encouraged to always vote the regular state absentee ballot regardless of the date of receipt.

To be added to these distribution lists or make changes to your current account, please e-mail the FVAP at vote@fvap.ncr.gov or contact Mr. Matt Knefel on Toll-Free 1-800-438-VOTE (8683), Commercial (703) 588-1584, or DSN (military) 425-1584. Current and back-issues of the Newsletters and News Releases are available in the publications section at the FVAP Website. ☑

The FWAB is available worldwide at U.S. Embassies and Consulates, on base through a Voting Assistance Officer or directly from the FVAP (contact information on page 2). When requesting copies from the FVAP, please indicate name, complete mailing address, telephone number (including any international prefixes), e-mail address and the quantity needed.

The FWAB is a great way to help ensure that your vote will be counted. Get your copy today! ☑

Where are Federal Write-In Absentee Ballots available?



Federal Voting Assistance Program
Department of Defense
1155 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1155



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Par Avion

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